

SOMERS RECREATION COMMISSION

MINUTES - Special MEETING

9, October 2012 7:00 PM Kibbe Fuller Community Center

Core talking points from session with Somers LAX, Somers Soccer Association and Alan Walker.

The Rec Commission would like the town political officials to act on the following talking points from tonight's meeting:

1. What is the town considering regarding the plan to develop 20 acres behind the high school and Field Rd. Park? Is there a timetable to develop this land? There are several opportunities with this land to develop all-purpose fields, additional baseball/softball fields, a walking trail, additional parking a roadways for the high school allowing handicap access to outer High School fields.
2. 415 Fund – Why was the fund dissolved? What would it take to bring this back as a working fund for the town? Currently the funds generated from park programs and fees are put into the general fund. The Rec Commission would like the 415 Fund instituted as a working town fund supporting the Rec Department. This fund would be used to support and re-invest in Parks programs. This could help support some of the following opportunities that the Rec Commission, Rec Department and Sports Associations would like to see come to fruition:
 - a. Development of 20 acres to support town wellness.
 - b. Install lighting on several Park locations including All Purpose fields and baseball fields.
 - c. Investment in a Turf field to be used by multiple sports associations.
3. Regarding the recent issues with LAX and fall field availability the following points are conveyed.
 - a. The #1 problem is communication.
 - i. SSA and SLA determined that proper communication and honesty would have resulted in a better recognition of field availability for the SLA fall program. The Rec Commission intends on reducing any communication issues with a Winter meeting in February to discuss Spring field needs. It is expected that each organization will come to the meeting with a full and honest list of field needs for the spring season.
 - ii. The Rec Commission, Town DPW and Rec Dept. needs to work directly with the Schools to understand how the winter and spring schedules will impact fields for each association and school sports. Yearly grid required for both town and school fields. Grid would include both practice and game schedules for each sport.
 - iii. SLA is hosting a fall program (with Ellington) for approx.. 16-20 teams. The SLA is interested in continuing this program in upcoming years. This opportunity includes games played on Somers town and schools fields for other towns. The TOWN needs to consider avenues for charging fees to outside towns to participate within the SLA fall program. These fees (hopefully put into the 415 fund) would be used to support field maintenance and preparation. The SLA would incur fees associated with umpire fees and any equipment needs (if applicable). The Rec Commission has submitted an opportunity for the Rec Department to implement not only for the SLA but all impacted sports/organized associations in town requiring access to town or school fields.

I. Call to Order – 7:07 pm.

II. Minutes of prior meeting (9/10) – N/A

III. Audience/Attendance

- Members – J. Jablonski, S. Woicik, K. McGuane, S. Gershowitz, L. Devine, L. Stetson
- Non-Members – Bruce Urban(DPW), Tom Hayowyk(SSA), Bill Conley(SSA), Joleen Speight(SLA), Mark Murdoch(SLA), Karen Murdoch(SLA), Pamela Moutford(SLA), Scott Moutford(SLA), Alan Walker(Somers AD), Ned Lynch(SLA), John Labric(SLA), Andrew Barrett(SLA), Scott Masamery(SLA), Mike Astone(SLA), Bob Nadler(Rangers), Ken Young(Rangers), Rich Brewer(SLA), Dean Giachello(SLA), J.E. Poley(SLA), Laurie Loiacono(SLA)

IV. Coordinator Report

Recreation Coordinator Report
10/9/2012

Seeking approval from Rec Commission Board for the event below to be held at Field Road on 10/27 from 6:00pm-9:00pm.

A middle school fundraiser (3-POP) program would like to hold a fundraiser for a local hero who is was a combat paramedic wounded in Afghanistan. He was also a volunteer EMT in town. They would like to hold the event at Field Road by showing a movie. I had her talk to Jose, gather information on movie licensing etc. and she has an application for the movie permit, but hasn't completed it until she gets approval. It costs \$200 for the permit and they have chosen a PG family movie. They can't charge admission or a fee or else the movie company takes half the proceeds, but they can accept donations, so they will do that and sell popcorn and drinks.

I talked to Todd Roland, Resident State Trooper (Jose) and they are good with having it at Field Road. The date they are looking at is 10/27. (*Approval from Rec Commission not needed. Hopefully the event was a success.*)

New Fall Recreation Programs

Bodyweight Fitness Classes forming now. Free class was offered on 10/8/2012 and another Free class will be offered on 10/15 (low turnout possibly due to Columbus Day Holiday (8 showed up). Paid class to begin on 10/22 and run for 4 weeks (\$25.00)

Zumba Fitness –New class begins next week 8/16/2012. . **Tuesday's 4pm @ Kibbe, 25.00 for 4 classes**

Zumbatomic– Friday night class is filled. Will run a 2nd session starting in November.

Kara Wolters Dream Big Girls Basketball Clinic-November 3, 2012 for girls in grades 5-8, fee is \$50.00 for half day clinic.

Due Date of Winter Gym Permits: 12/3/2012

V. DPW Parks Report – **N/A**

VI. Old Business:

- a. Continued discussion re: 2013 Field Usage
 - i. Tonight's meeting had several members of the Somers LAX and Somers Soccer Association to discuss the recent situation regarding access to town fields. The LAX has provided a list of talking points for tonight's meeting, see below:

INFORMATION and SPEAKING POINTS OCTOBER 9, 2012 RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Lacrosse Program

- Lacrosse is a growing sport with registrations increasing each year

- Somers is known across the region for maintaining a strong tradition of lacrosse. The Paul Bowers Tournament is now in its 28th year and is a sportmanship event for youth in grades 3-8 hosted in Somers for over 150 teams from New England every June. Proceeds from this tournament go to a Scholarship fund and toward town capital or field improvements.
- While Spring is our main season, in recent years Somers parents have pushed for Lacrosse to offer additional opportunities for youth to play in the off season (similar to soccer, softball, baseball, etc). Fall has become very popular with games once per week. This Fall, 77 Somers families are playing lacrosse. We need fields to run our program in the Fall. This includes hosting a mini-jamboree on Halloween weekend.
- Over the past few years, we have experienced some challenges either obtaining field space for lacrosse events, ensuring ongoing field mowing and maintenance, or both. This is due to many factors.
- Lacrosse has invested budget dollars each year in field improvements and plans to continue to do so for the betterment of all of our sports programs. Field investment has included:
 - \$6600 in fertilization, lime, aeration at MBA fields (2011-1012)
 - \$1000 per year for Porta-Potties at MBA and Firehouse
 - Purchase of a grass seeder for BOE maintenance in 2005
 - Purchase and installation of fencing along woods behind goals at Firehouse
 - Wall Ball installation at Firehouse
- Lacrosse is in this for the long haul. We are willing to offer financial and volunteer support in developing our fields, and would like to work cooperatively with the Rec Commission, Selectman and other governing bodies to create a Field Program that works for everyone so that conflicts and issues can be eliminated. As taxpayers and parents, we want our youth have safe fields to play on, every season.
- Our 2012-13 budget will include \$3000 to \$6000 in field care and maintenance and we are also looking to purchase new team benches for MBA in spring 2013.

Town Field Program: Use, Maintenance, Scheduling, Funding

Field Program

We have enough field space for all sports to play every season. We are asking town leaders for a centralized, organized field program that includes:

- 1) field care plan (thatching, aeration, fertilization)
- 2) field maintenance plan (mowing, lining)
- 3) field schedules to allow for sharing field space and coordinated usage

With a well coordinated program and a cooperative effort, fields can be used and maintained in top shape for our youth and school sports.

Strategic Field Planning

In addition, we are asking for Strategic Planning so that Somers can develop state of the art field opportunities in the coming years. This could include:

- 1) Turf Field Planning: most other towns across CT have at least one turf field. Grants are available to help towns install them. Somers Lacrosse will work on a proposal to identify the costs and feasibility of such a field, and would like the support of the town and other sports associations to pursue this project.

1. Capital Investments: new equipment and field improvements

VII. New Business:

- a. Expectations for Spring field requests
 - i. To prepare for Spring field requests the Rec Commission will meet with the schools, town DPW, Rec. Dept. and sports associations on Monday, Feb. 4th.
- b. 50/70 field progress
 - i.

VII: Correspondence – N/A

VIII: Next Meeting – Monday, November 12th – Special Meeting

IX: Adjournment